

## GB Postage Stamps Overprinted for use Abroad.

There are a small number of G.B. Postage Stamps that, over the years, have been overprinted specifically for use abroad, some of which are known to have been Perfinned. As a general statement, these fall outside the scope of the 'Gault Catalogue of G.B. Perfins', but their existence naturally forms a sub-category which warrants documentation.

This is very much a '*Work in Progress*' study, so your input would be gratefully received!

## British Post Offices in Morocco.

The British Post Offices in Morocco, also known as the '*Morocco Agencies*', was a system of post offices operated initially by Gibraltar, and later, by the United Kingdom.



The very first Post Office in Morocco was established in Tangier in **1857**, but mail was simply bagged there and forwarded to Gibraltar where it received the standard 'A26' Gibraltar postmark. From **1872** Tangier had its own postmark, but this was applied *alongside* the stamps, allowing the Gibraltar cancellation to cancel them. Others towns followed suit as shown in the Rabat example above.

Since the Post Offices were under the direct control of *Gibraltar*, they switched to the use of Gibraltar stamps after they came into use on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1886. Additional offices opened in various Moroccan seaports during the 1880s, and inland at Fez (1892), and Meknes (1907). From **1898** the Gibraltar stamps were overprinted '**Morocco/Agencies**', initially at the offices of the Gibraltar Chronicle, then later on in London.



On **1<sup>st</sup> January 1907**, the British Post Office took direct control of the post offices in Morocco, operating them until Moroccan independence in 1956. Thus, from 1907 onwards, stamps were overprints on *British issues*, and issued in no less than **three** different currencies.

- **British-currency** stamps were available at any office, and primarily intended for parcels and later on, airmail. Both regular and some commemorative issues were overprinted, all with '**Morocco/Agencies**', up to the King Edward VIII issue of 1936. Subsequently, unoverprinted stamps were used until 1949, when they were again overprinted for use at Tetuan, which by 1949, was the sole remaining office. The exception was Tangier, which had its own overprints - see below.
- **Spanish-currency** stamps were also available at all offices until the establishment of the French Zone, after which they were limited to the Spanish Zone. The overprint was basically the same as for the British-currency stamps, with the added complication of needing to fit in the denomination in *Centimos* and *Pesetas*. All types of British stamps were overprinted, the last being the issues of Queen Elizabeth II in the summer of 1956. All were withdrawn from sale **31<sup>st</sup> December 1956**.
- **French-currency** stamps in *Centimes* and *Francs*, were intended for use in the French Zone. They date from **1917**, and continued in use until the **8<sup>th</sup> January 1938**, when they were withdrawn from sale. The overprints are just as for the Spanish currency, but fewer types were produced.
- The **Tangier International Zone** received its own overprints beginning in **1927**. As British currency was in use in that office, the overprint simply reads '**TANGIER**'. This continued until **1<sup>st</sup> April 1957** when an '**1857-1957**' commemorative overprint was added to celebrate the centenary of the Post Office. However, this was somewhat short-lived as the office in Tangier was closed and the stamps withdrawn from sale on **30<sup>th</sup> April 1957**.



Courtesy of *British post offices in Morocco* - Wikipedia (last updated 9<sup>th</sup> October 2018).

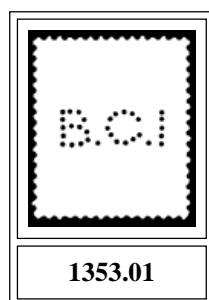
Companies in Morocco using Perfins on overprinted G.B. postage stamps.

- **Banca Commerciale Italiana, Casablanca.**
- **Banque D'etat Du Maroc** - The State Bank of Morocco.
- **Comptoir National D'escompte, Tangier.**
- **Société Marseillaise de Crédit, Casablanca.**

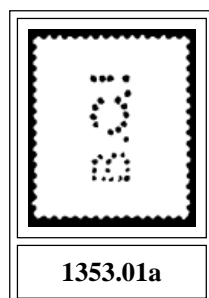
### **Banca Commerciale Italiana, Casablanca.**

Founded in **1894** in Milan with German, Austrian and Swiss capital, **Banca Commerciale Italiana** ('BCI' for short) was, for over a century, an important part of the Italian banking system with an excellent reputation abroad. In London in 1911, 'BCI' set up the first branch abroad of an Italian bank, quickly followed by a branch in New York, and as time passed by, more and more branches and equity investments in various countries worldwide. In 1994, its centenary year, **Banca Commerciale Italiana** was privatised, and in May 2001 'BCI' merged with 'Banca Intesa', forming 'IntesaBCI'.

There are a number of "B.C.I." and "B.C.I." dies used by the 'Italian Commercial Bank' in various countries - shown here are the silhouettes for two "B.C.I." dies found on G.B. Postage Stamps, B1353.01 known used 1952-1955, and B1353.01a in use 1930-1936.



In use: 1952-1955.  
 Dates: ... 1955.  
 Issues: **No overprint:**  
           S 2d  
           U(SEC) 2d  
 Note: Illustrated in Tilles as B135A.1.  
 Ident: Ø Banca Commerciale Italiana,  
           30A Threadneedle St,  
           London EC2.  
 Pmks:



In use: 1930-1937.  
 Dates: ... Jan 1937 - 3 Mar 1937.  
 Issues: **'MOROCCO/AGENCIES'** and  
           French currency o/p:  
 Stamps illustrated below.  
 Ident: Ø Banca Commerciale Italiana,  
           Casablanca,  
           Morocco.  
 Pmks:

### French Currency.

Although the “B” can’t generally be seen clearly, this first group of stamps are thought to be “B.C.I” (C1353.01a)



SG202



SG205



SG208



SG211



*Probably Type ‘A’ - SG200*

Characteristic ‘gap’ in the back of the “C” from c1935 - “B.C.I” (C1353.01a).



SG211



SG215



SG216



SG221



2/6d Type ‘B’ - SG225



SG228

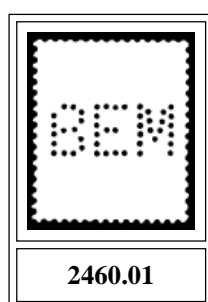
Reported examples for B1353.01a include:

SG200, 202, 203 (10c on 1d), 205, 207 (50c on 5d), 208, 210 (1 F on 10d), 211, 215, 216, 217, 219 (25c on 2½d), 220, 221, 225, and 228.

# **Banque D'état Du Maroc - The State Bank of Morocco.**

The State Bank of Morocco was founded in Tangier in 1907, following the treaty of Algeiras (1906) which granted the bank the authority to issue 'money'.

The Catalogue or Moroccan Perfins lists six "BEM" dies, two of which (BEM4 & BEM5) can be found on overprinted G.B. Postage Stamps as B2460.01 & B2460.01a, one 15mm wide and the other 16mm. Cancellations reported are from Mazagan Kenit, Mogador, Rabat, Settif, Tangier, and Tetuan.



In use: 1920-1936.  
Issues: **MOROCCO AGENCIES o/p**  
ED: 17 Jan 1935.  
LD: ... Oct 1936.  
I(RC) 1d - "B" complete  
Remainder are "B" incomplete:  
I(RC) 1d, 3d  
I(BC) 2½d, 3d  
M 2½d, 3d  
N 1½d  
O 2½d (both o/p settings)

1927-1941.  
**TANGIER o/p**  
ED: 17 Jan 1935.  
LD: 10 Sep 1941.  
I(BC) ½d-2d, 3d  
M ½d  
N 1d, 1½d  
O 1½d  
P 1½d  
Q ½d-1½d  
T ½d, 1½d (SG479/481)

1935-1941.  
**No overprint:**  
ED:  
LD: 10 Sep 1941.  
M ½d, 1d  
Q 2½d, 3d

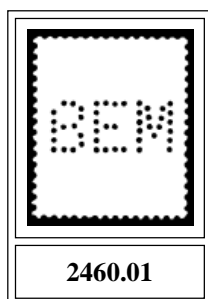
Note: N°. 4 in the Morocco Perfin Catalogue. Pattern **15mm** wide. Stamps overprinted **TANGIER** were available from 1927, until the Post Office in Tangier closed on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1957. *Usually* there's a pin missing from the tip of the "B", pointing to a single headed die.

Ident: Banque d'État du Maroc, H/O Tangier, Morocco.

Pmks: British Post Office/Tangier.

## **Morocco Agencies - British currency.**

"B" complete - Perfin usually upright but inverted.



SG43



SG46

The top corner pin to the "B" went missing *c1924* and doesn't appear to have been repaired.

Pin missing from tip of "B" - Perfin usually sideways.



SG46



SG58



SG59



SG64 - 1½d (2½d known)



SG69



SG70



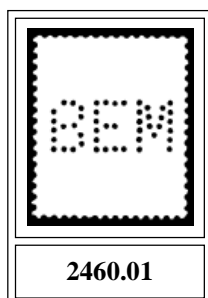
SG76a



SG76b

### Tangier - British currency (available from 1927).

*All* examples have a pin missing from the tip of the “B”, which is consistent with the pin going missing *c1925*.



SG231



SG232



SG233



SG234



SG235



SG244



SG245



SG246



SG248



SG250

Earliest and latest dates: -----1919, 11-9-1941.

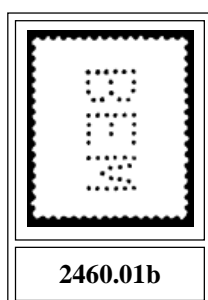
Reported examples include: **SG43, 46, 58b, 64, 65** (SJ 2½d), **69, 70, 76a, 76b, 132, 134, 158, 166, 210, 211, 231, 232, 234, 235, 239, 240, 242, 244, 245, 246, 247** (1½d), **248, 249, 250, 252** (1d o/p), and **Z183** (3d).

SG 46,234,235 are recorded on BEM Registered cover from Tangier 10-12-1935.

SG 252 & Z183 are recorded on cover to U.S.A from BPO Tangier, dated 10-9-1941.

### Morocco Agencies - Spanish currency.

Subtle differences in pin positions point to a *quite separate die*, in use 1930-1935.



SG132



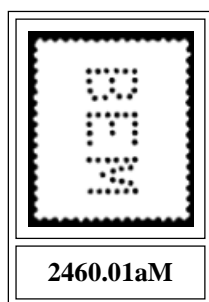
SG134



SG135



SG158



In use: 1930-1935.  
 Dates: 13 June 1935.  
 Issues: **MOROCCO AGENCIES o/p**  
**French currency**  
 I(BC) 5d, 10d, 1/-  
 J 2/6d (Type 'B') M 5d, 10d  
  
**TANGIER o/p**  
 N 1d, 1½d  
 Note: Pattern **16mm** wide.  
 Ident:

Pmks: Casablanca.

### French Currency.



SG207



SG210



SG211



SG221



SG223



2/6d Type 'B' - SG225

The spacing of the two patterns on this large format stamp point to the possibility that the die was multiheaded at least **2x1**, with the letters arranged sideways reading **down** the stamp.

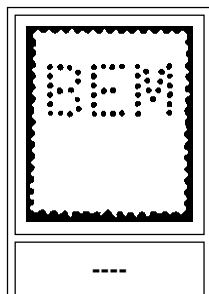
Reported examples include: SG58b, 206 (40c on 4d), **207, 210, 211, 221, 223, 225, 231, 233, and 246.**

### Tangier - British currency.

Silver Jubilee  
 1d & 1½d known  
 o/p TANGIER



The French Post Office in Tangier also used overprinted French 'Maroc' stamps as these two examples show. The lower loop to the "B" has two 'well angled' pins, so it's none of the dies that have just been dealt with.



These two French 'Maroc' stamps date to the early 1920's.

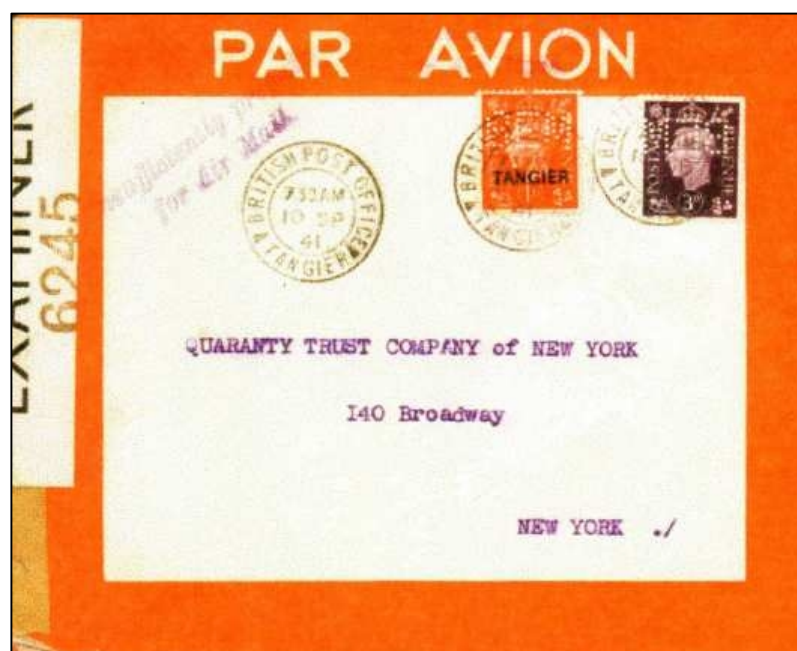
### "BEM" Covers



Cover from Tangier to Monaco, postmarked British Post Office - Tangier, 19 JA/35, has a 2½d GV Typograph overprinted 'MOROCCO AGENCIES'. The stamp has been perfined "BEM" (B2460.01) with the "B" missing the corner pin.



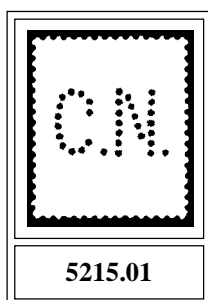
Registered cover from Tanger to Celje, Yugoslavia, dated 10 DE/35, with a mix of overprinted stamps, all three of which have a Perfin. The ½d KGV photogravure has ‘TANGIER’ and a “BEM” Perfin, the 2d KGV Typograph also has ‘TANGIER’ with “BEM” Perfin, and the 3d GV Typograph is overprinted ‘MOROCCO AGENCIES’ and also has the Perfin “BEM” (B2640.01) with the “B” missing the corner pin.



This cover from Tanger to New York, postmarked British Post Office - Tanger, 10 SP/41, has a 1d Pale Scarlet overprinted ‘TANGIER’, together with a standard 3d Violet without the overprint. Both show “BEM” (B2460.01) with the “B” missing the corner pin.

### Comptoir National D'escompte, Tangier.

From 1898-1906, Gibraltar Postage Stamps overprinted '**Morocco Agencies**' were used. On 1<sup>st</sup> January 1907, the British Post Office took direct control of the 'British' post offices in Morocco, using overprints on British issues, in this case with Spanish currency overprints.



In use: 1905-1910.  
 Dates:  
 Issues: **Gibraltar stamps** overprinted  
           '**Morocco Agencies**'.  
           **GB stamps** overprinted  
           '**MOROCCO/AGENCIES**'  
           with Spanish currency o/p.  
 Ident: Comptoir National D'escompte,  
           Tangier Branch.  
 Pmks: 'A26' (Gibraltar).

### Overprinted Gibraltar stamps.



SG17 or 24



SG18 or 25



SG19 or 26



SG20 or 27

### Overprinted G.B. stamps.

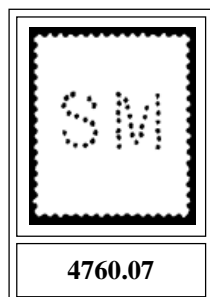


SG116

Cancellations (where known) are from Tangier with an 'A26' Gibraltar cancel.  
 Reported examples include: SG17, 18, 19, 20, 24 (5c), 25 (10c), 26 (20c), 27 (25c), 28, and **116** (25 c).

### Société Marseillaise de Crédit, Casablanca.

The *Société Marseillaise de Crédit* was created in 1865 by Joseph Grandval, Victor Roux, Albert Rostand and Armand Bergasse, opening its first local branch in 1909. In 1913 it greatly expanded its sphere of influence by buying the Banque du Sud-Est and the Comptoir Commercial d'Escompte du Midi, and in 1919, it spread to Tunisia, Algeria and *Morocco*.



In use: 1930-1936.  
 Dates: 5 Dec 1936.  
 Issues: **MOROCCO AGENCIES** o/p  
 (French currency)  
 I(BC) 9d - 75 Centimes.  
 M 5d - 50 Centimes.  
 Note: Die probably single headed.  
 Ident: Ø Société Marseillaise de  
 Crédit, Casablanca.

Pmks: Casablanca.



SG208



SG221

Reported examples include: SG206 (40c on 4d), **208**, 210 (1F on 10d), and **221**.



Also known on French 'Maroc' stamps overprinted '**TANGER**'  
 as shown on this 25c stamp dating to the 1920's.

### Morocco Study - Acknowledgements to:

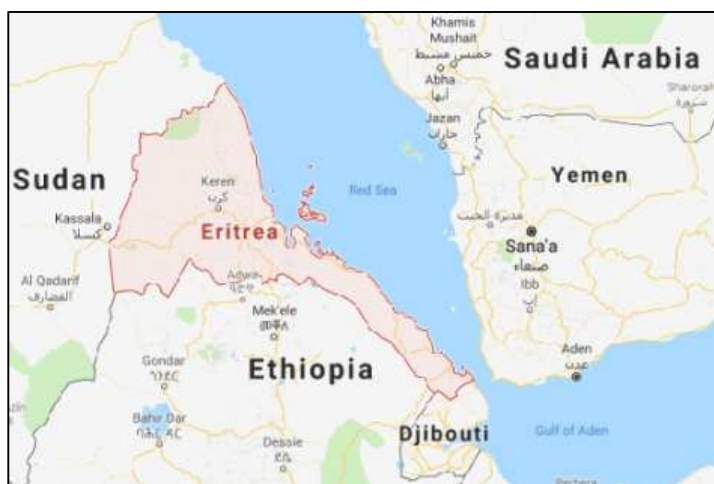
- **Jeff Turnbull** for the original idea for this study, scans of his overprint collection, and copies of the notes he's compiled over the last two decades.
- **Mike Behm** (Canada), **Ian Hamill** (New Zealand), and **Peter Maybury** (South Africa).
- Various articles in the Perfin Society Bulletin (mainly by **Tony Stanford**) - 2008.
- **British Post Offices in Morocco** - Wikipedia.
- **Silver Jubilee Perfin List** - **Neil Donen** (2012) <http://www.philatel2.com/jubilee>

And finally, if you can add anything new to the study, *please let the Catalogue Editor know!*

Information correct to *1<sup>st</sup> January 2019*.

## British Post Offices in Eritrea.

Eritrea is a country in north-east African with a coastline on the Red Sea, as well as sharing borders with Sudan, Ethiopia, and Djibouti (old French Somaliland). The capital city, Asmara, is known for its colonial buildings and Art Deco structures.



The Italians originally created the colony of Eritrea in the 19<sup>th</sup> century centred on a town which they called Asmara. In 1936, just before WWII, the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini announced the formation of '*Italian East Africa*' (Africa Orientale Italiana, or AOI for short), formed from *Ethiopia* and the colonies of '*Italian Eritrea*', and '*Italian Somaliland*'. On the 10<sup>th</sup> June 1940, Mussolini declared war on Britain and France, which made Italian military forces in the AOI (and elsewhere) a threat to the British and French colonies in East Africa.

After the surrender of Italian forces, and the Italian armistice in September 1943, Eritrea was placed under British military administration. Just prior to that, the British 'Middle East Forces' (i.e. military personnel) in Eritrea used, from March 1942, G.B. stamps overprinted '**M.E.F.**' (**M**iddle **E**ast **F**orces) which were sold in local currency equivalents (East Africa shillings and cents) but not included in the overprint.



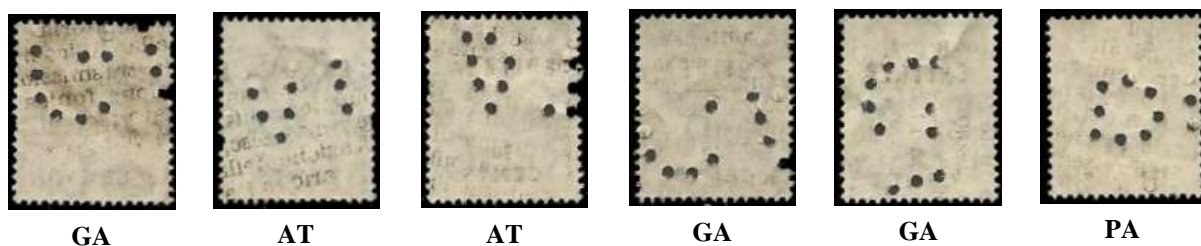
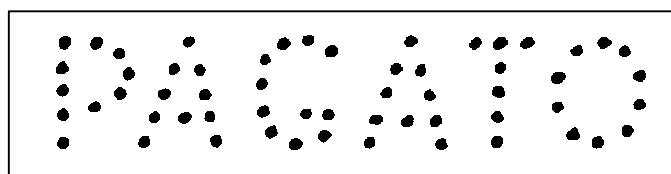
These were replaced in 1948 by issues overprinted with the country name, '**Eritrea**', along with the local currency equivalents. The first set of twelve stamps for use by the **British Military Administration** ('**B.M.A.**'), was issued 27<sup>th</sup> May 1948, along with a 13<sup>th</sup> stamp - 65c - added 1<sup>st</sup> February 1949. With the change to civilian government, the overprint was changed to '**B. A.**' - '**British Administration**' simply by removing the '**M.**' portion, and the thirteen stamps re-issued 6<sup>th</sup> February 1950. The colour of the low value stamps was changed in 1951, along with new high value stamps, and the resulting seven new stamps released on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May, the day the 'Festival of Britain' was opened by King George VI. The thirty-three 'Eritrea' stamps are illustrated for reference after the section on 'Perfins'.

The following stamps of KGVI are overprinted 'B. A./ERITREA' with additional currency overprints in East African Shillings and Cents. These overprints were introduced 6<sup>th</sup> February 1950, and were replaced by 'changed colour' issues on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1951. These 'British Admistration' overprints replaced a similar series overprinted 'B.M.A/ERITREA' used during the 'British Military Admistration' of Eritrea. These were introduced 27<sup>th</sup> May 1948, with an additional 65c denomination on an 8d stamp introduced 1<sup>st</sup> February 1949.



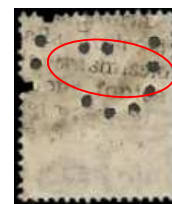
Each of the above overprinted stamps (probably all from the 'colour change era') was affixed to a document *prior* to perforation. There is a date of '11.51', along with partial postmarks of 'ASS(AB)', '...ETTAZ...', '... (C)ENTRAL', and 'ERITREA'. The November 1951 date fits conveniently within the 1950-1952 philatelic footprint.

The letters are part of the Italian word 'PAGATO' {PAID}.



And as to what the document was ....

The word '**trasmissio**', which can just be made out on the back of the 5c overprinted stamp, is *Italian* for 'transmission', which is understandable as the main foreign language then spoken in Eritrea was *Italian*. Italian was introduced in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the colonial authorities in 'Italian Eritrea', and is still used today in some areas of business. *English* was introduced in the 1940's under the British Military Administration of 'Italian Eritrea', and is now used as the 'de facto' working language.



Reversed



This portion of a document spotted on e-Bay by *Peter Maybury* shows the use of a high value overprinted stamp, with an additional series of letters punctured across it through both document and stamp. The hand-stamped cancel reads '**ASMARA TELEGRAFO ACCETTAZIONE**' {translates as 'Asmara Telegraph Accepted'} with the date 17.11.51. The word '**PAGATO**' {meaning Paid} has been perforated across both stamp and document - a Telegram Form.

Note that these Telegram Forms and loose stamps are rare survivors as they should have all been pulped after being retained for reference for a limited period.

The following Telegraph cancels were re-used Italian cancels, all of which may be found on Telegram Forms cancelled '**PAGATO**'.



Asmara Telegrafo Accettazione.

17-10-1951    2-11-1951    13-11-1951  
17-11-1951    25-11-1951    29-11-1951



**Asmara Central.**

2-10-1951    4-10-1951    19-10-1951  
12-11-1951    28-11-1951    31-1-1952



**Asmara - (Eritrea).**

... 4-1952



**Massaua-Vaglia (A).**

21-11-1951



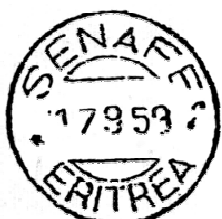
**Massaua-Vaglia (B).**

29-10-1951



**Assab (Eritrea).**

10-11-1951    16-11-1951    20-11-1951



**Senafe / Eritrea.**

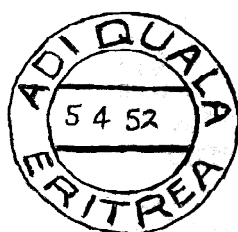
... 1952

The listed dates have been compiled by *Jeff Turnbull* over the past 20 years.  
If you can add anything to what is listed, please let Jeff know [[mrjandit@gmail.com](mailto:mrjandit@gmail.com)].

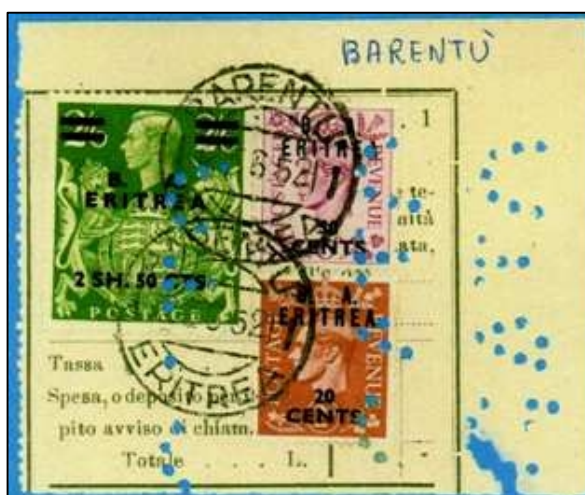
*Jeff Turnbull* also reports the following cancels found on 'PAGATO' Telegraph Receipts:

**ACORDAT, ADI'CAIE', and ADI QUALA.**

*'Ricevuta' = 'Receipt'*



ADI UGRI, ASMARA VAGLIA, and BARENTU



CHEREN, GHINDA, and NACFA



**G.B. Postage Stamps overprinted 'ERITREA'.**

British Military Administration ('**B.M.A.**'), issued 27<sup>th</sup> May 1948.  
The 65c stamp was added 1<sup>st</sup> February 1949).



'**B. A.**' - 'British Administration' ('**B. A.**') issued 6th February 1950.



‘B. A.’ - ‘British Aministration’ (‘B. A.’) - the colours of the low value stamps were changed and new high value stamps released 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1951.



Note the more compact “B.M.” overprint used on two of the high value stamps.

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#### Eritrea Study - Acknowledgements to:

- *Peter Maybury* and *Jeff Turnbull* for providing scan of the items in their collections.
- *GB Overprint Society website* for much of the background philatelic information.
- *GB Overprint Society* - The ‘Overprinter’ - various articles by Nicola Sciarra.
- *Italia Filatelica* - The Collector (N1959) - article by Rinaldo Guerrisi (Asmara).

And finally, if you can add anything new to the study, *please let the Catalogue Editor know!*

Information correct to **24<sup>th</sup> January 2019.**

## British Post Offices in the ‘Ottoman Empire’.

The Ottoman Empire was founded around 1299 by Osman I (1258-1326) in Anatolia (part of present day Turkey). In 1453 the capital of the Byzantine Empire, Constantinople (Istanbul), was seized by Ottoman Turks led by Mehmed II (1432-1481). The Empire reached its peak under Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566). At its peak it included the modern day countries of Bulgaria, Greece, Albania, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Ukraine (part), Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, Iran (part), Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Egypt (part), Libya (part), Tunisia, and Algeria (part). The end came after World War I when what remained of the Ottoman Empire was abolished and the Republic of Turkey was created on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1922.



Prior to 1884, British Post Offices in the ‘Ottoman Empire’ used standard British postage stamps, but from **1<sup>st</sup> August 1885** current British stamps overprinted in local **Turkish currency** were used (40 Paras = 1 Piastre). This action was deemed necessary to safeguard finances due to the large fluctuations in exchange rates. Large quantities of British postage stamps could be purchased when the exchange rate was low, and then sold back to the Post Office for a profit when the exchange rate was high.

The word ‘**Levant**’ was the name given to an area of the Eastern Mediterranean encompassing the countries now known as Lebanon, Syria, and Israel.

During King Edward VII’s reign, G.B. postage stamps overprinted ‘**LEVANT**’ were introduced, and as these were intended to be affixed to items of mail by Post Office officials, it was considered unnecessary for there to be Turkish currency overprint. These overprinted stamps were not normally made available to the general public. Note that the ‘**LEVANT**’ overprints ran in parallel with the Turkish currency overprints and were even used in the same places:

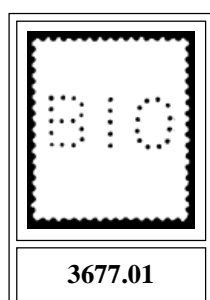
Beirut (Lebanon), *Constantinople/Istanbul* and *Smyrna/Izmir* (Turkey), Salonica (Greece).

Note - During WWI Turkey revoked the ‘Capitalisations’ Treaty which forbade Turkey from operating International Mail services.

Currently there are only **six** companies known to have used the overprinted G.B. postage stamps, detailed as follows:

**Banque Imperial Ottomane (Imperial Ottoman Bank), Constantinople (Istanbul).**

The Bank has its foundations in 1856 in Constantinople, present day Istanbul, in a joint venture between the Ottoman Government, British interests (holding the majority of shares), and the French Banque de Paris et Pays-Bas. It became known as the ***Imperial Ottoman Bank*** on 4<sup>th</sup> February 1863. After Turkey became a Republic, the name changed in 1924 to the ***Ottoman Bank***. Later it became a commercial Bank (1933), and then a private institution (1952).



In use: 1900-1914.  
 Dates: 21 Oct 1901 - 2 Apr 1914.  
 Issues: **Without overprint:**  
     E ½d (gn)  
     F 1d - dated 11 Nov 1902.  
**With Turkish currency o/p:**  
     E 2½d, 5d, 10d  
     F 1½d, 2½d, 3d, 4d (or) 5d, 10d  
     I(RC) 4d  
**With 'LEVANT' overprint:**  
     F ½d (ye-gn), 1d, 1½d

Overprint	G.B. Stamps	Introduced
<b>40 PARAS</b>	E 2½d	... June 1887
<b>80 PARAS</b>	E 5d	... June 1890
<b>4 PIASTRES</b>	E 10d	... Nov 1896
<b>30 PARAS</b>	F 1½d	16 Nov 1909
<b>40 PARAS</b>	F 2½d	... Mar 1902
<b>80 PARAS</b>	F 5d	5 June 1902
<b>1 PIASTRE</b>	F 2½d	17 Apr 1906
<b>1¼ PIASTRE</b>	F 3d	24 Jan 1910
<b>1¾ PIASTRE</b>	F 4d (or)	24 Jan 1910
<b>2 PIASTRES</b>	F 5d	11 Nov 1905
<b>4 PIASTRES</b>	F 10d	6 Sep 1902
<b>1¾ PIASTRE</b>	I(RC) 4d	... July 1913

Note: Perfin usually found sideways.  
 Ident: Imperial Ottoman Bank, Constantinople, Turkey.  
     {Banque Imperial Ottomane}.  
 Pmks: British Post Office, Constantinople.  
 Note: Perfin also known on the stamps of **France, Italy, Austria,**  
     and **Germany**.

**Turkish Currency.**



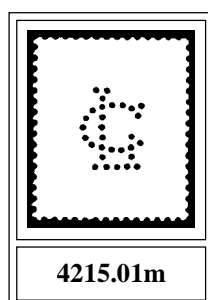
**British Currency.**



Overprint	G.B. Stamps	Introduced
<b>LEVANT</b>	F ½d (ye-gn)	15 Aug 1905
<b>LEVANT</b>	F 1d	15 Aug 1905
<b>LEVANT</b>	F 1½d	15 Aug 1905

### Crédit Lyonnais - Constantinople (Istanbul) branch.

The Bank was founded in Lyon (France) on 6<sup>th</sup> July 1863 by Henri Germain (1824-1905), a French Banker and Politician. The Constantinople office was added in 1875, and by 1900 the Bank had become the largest in the world! It was nationalised in 1945 after WWII, but financial disaster loomed in the early 1990's, and only avoided by the intervention of the French Government. On 5<sup>th</sup> May 1996 a fire broke out in the main trading rooms of the H/O in Paris, which eventually engulfed the building destroying two thirds of the fabric, but more importantly, destroying the bank archives and electronic data.



In use: 1905-1923.  
 Dates: 13 Dec 1907 - 22 July 1923.  
 Issues: **Without overprint:**  
 F ½d (ye-gn)  
 I(RC) ½d, 1d, 2d (Die I), 3d  
**With Turkish currency o/p:**  
 F 2½d - '40 PARAS'.  
 F 2½d - '1 PIASTRE'  
**With 'LEVANT' overprint:**  
 F ½d (ye-gn), 1d, 2½d  
 H ½d I(RC) ½d

Overprint	G.B. Stamps	Introduced
<b>40 PARAS</b>	F 2½d	... Mar 1902
<b>1 PIASTRE</b>	F 2½d	17 Apr 1906
<b>LEVANT</b>	F ½d (ye-gn)	15 Aug 1905
<b>LEVANT</b>	F 1d	15 Aug 1905
<b>LEVANT</b>	F 2½d	15 Aug 1905
<b>LEVANT</b>	H ½d - Die II	19 Mar 1912
<b>LEVANT</b>	I(RC) ½d	... July 1913

Ident: Ø Crédit Lyonnais, Bankers, H/O Paris.  
 Constantinople branch, Turkey.

Pmks: British P.O., Constantinople.

### Turkish Currency.



### British Currency.



Piece showing stamps *without* an overprint  
 postmarked British P.O., Constantinople,  
 15<sup>th</sup> Feb 1920.

Note: the British P.O.'s in Turkey were closed in September 1923.

Virtually identical Perfins may be found on postage stamps of the following countries.



Italy

Austria

Turkey

Germany

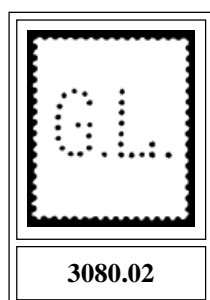
France

Silhouettes kindly supplied by the late Magnus Werner.

**Gresham Life Assurance Society Ltd** - Constantinople (Istanbul) branch - *Suspected user*.

The Society was founded in London in 1848, and celebrated its centenary by publishing a book called 'One Hundred Years ago and Today'. Over the years the company has operated from various addresses in London - 37 Old Jewry (1855); St Mildred's House, Poultry (1901); 188/190 Fleet St (1928); and Aldwych House, with many branch offices throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland.

The *suspected* user comes from a Registered Letter dated 24<sup>th</sup> December 1919, with two 2½d G.B. stamps (without Perfins) overprinted '1 PIASTRE', addressed to '**Gresham Life Assurance Society Ltd**', Rue Moumthane, Galata, Constantinople.



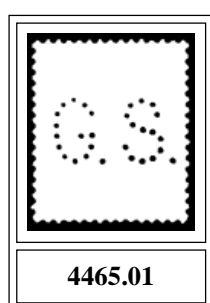
In use: 1905-1914.  
 Dates: 21 Mar 1914.  
 Issues: **With Turkish currency o/p:**  
 F 2½d - '1 PIASTRE'  
 F 6d - '2 PIASTRES'  
 I(RC) 2½d - '1 PIASTRE'  
 Ident: Ø Gresham Life Assurance  
 Society Ltd, Rue Moumthane,  
 Galata, Constantinople.  
 Pmks: British P.O., Constantinople.

Overprint	G.B. Stamps	Introduced
1 PIASTRE	F 2½d	17 Apr 1906
2½ PIASTRES	F 6d	24 Jan 1910
1 PIASTRE	I(RC) 2½d	... June 1913

**Turkish Currency.**



**George Stameny, Agent, Smyrna (Izmir).**



In use: 1913-1914.  
 Dates: 14 Nov 1913.  
 Issues: **Without overprint:**  
 I(RC) 1d, 2d  
**With Turkish currency o/p:**  
 I(RC) 2½d - '1 PIASTRE'.  
**With 'LEVANT' overprint:**  
 I(RC) 1d  
 Ident: George Stameny, Agent,  
 Smyrna, (present day Izmir),  
 Turkey.  
 Pmks: Sm(yrna).

Overprint	G.B. Stamps	Introduced
1 PIASTRE	I(RC) 2½d	... June 1913
LEVANT	I(RC) 1d	... July 1913

**British Currency.**



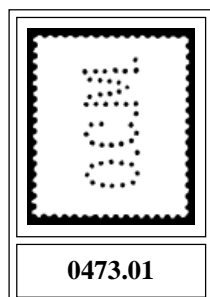
The Perfin is also known on stamps from  
 Austria, Greece, Italy, and Turkey.

**GEO. STAMENY**  
**AGENT**  
**SMYRNA**

The confirmed identity above comes from an  
 Austrian Postcard with the Perfin.

## Oriental Carpet Manufacturers Ltd, Smyrna (Izmir).

The '*Oriental Carpet Manufacturers Ltd*' was set up by a group of London merchants specifically to manufacture 'Oriental' carpets, especially 'Persian' carpets. It was established in Smyrna towards the end of 1907. The company was dissolved as late as 1986.



In use: 1913-1914.  
 Dates: ... Feb 1914.  
 Issues: **With Turkish currency o/p:**  
 F 2½d - '1 PIASTRE'  
 I(RC) 2½d - '1 PIASTRE'.

**With 'LEVANT' overprint:**  
 F ½d (ye-gn)

Note: Also known on **Austrian** stamps.

Ident: Oriental Carpet Mfrs Ltd,  
 Smyrna, (presentday Izmir),  
 Turkey.

Pmks: Smyr(na), and British P.O., ...

Overprint	G.B. Stamps	Introduced
<b>1 PIASTRE</b>	F 2½d	17 Apr 1906
<b>1 PIASTRE</b>	I(RC) 2½d	... June 1913
<b>LEVANT</b>	F ½d (ye-gn)	15 Aug 1905

### Turkish Currency.



### British Currency .



## Banca Commerciale Italiana, Constantinople.

Founded in **1894** in Milan with German, Austrian and Swiss capital, *Banca Commerciale Italiana* ('BCI' for short) was, for over a century, an important part of the Italian banking system with an excellent reputation abroad



These overprinted G.B. stamps, KGV ½d (30 'PARAS'), 2½d (¾ 'PIASTRES'), and 1d (15 'PIASTRES) each has a "B.C.I." Perfin, along with partial 'British Post Office, Constantinople' postmarks. The Perfin "B.C.I." (B1353.01a) is shown above for reference only as it cannot be established yet as to the precise nature of the Perfin used on the stamps.

### 'Levant' Study - Acknowledgements to:

- **Peter Maybury** (South Africa) for providing scans of items in his collection.
- **Jeff Turnbull** for providing scans of items in his collection, plus copious research notes.
- **GB Overprint Society website** for much of the background philatelic information.
- **The Middle East Philatelic Bulletin** (No 1 Autumn 2015) - Dick Scheper article.

And finally, if you can add anything new to the study, *please let the Catalogue Editor know!*

Information correct to **26<sup>th</sup> January 2019.**